

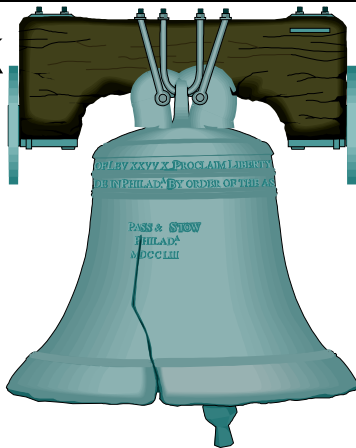
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# OVERSEAS TOUR READINESS CHECK

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## Reality Check

Before transfer to an overseas assignment, every service member must be declared eligible for such duty by the commanding officer of the detaching unit. The Navy does not want to send overseas those service members who could be expected to experience difficulty. The overseas screening and selection program is designed to eliminate errors and reduce wasteful and nonproductive expenditures associated with overseas transfers. When you are interviewed, be totally candid. Do not treat this as a routine "rubber stamp" issue or let your spouse treat it that way. Do not brush aside or hide problems which you think may have a bearing on your eligibility for transfer or on your ability to complete a full tour of duty. Remember, the program is not designed to pry into your private life or have you reveal secrets you feel belong to



*Be proud, not arrogant,  
about what sets us  
apart as Americans*

you and your family. It is intended to help you and the Navy from making a serious and costly mistake. By the way, failure to overseas screen or a request not to screen due to mitigating circumstances does not mean a "black mark" on one's career.

Overseas screening is a time for you to take a hard look at yourself and your family. Going overseas can be enormous fun. However, if you have troubling problems at home (financial, educational, medical, social or others), be sure they have been seriously considered and/or resolved

*There is one thing  
that is predictable  
about living overseas -  
it will be different from  
living in the U.S.*

## You Are The US Image

A thousand good deeds are easily overshadowed by a single negative incident. Most Sailors, Marines and their families overwhelmingly attempt to live in harmony within the host countries. Some even become active in community work. And yet the image of all of these well-meaning people as well as the very image of the U.S. can be damaged by the acts of a few individuals who commit crimes while overseas.

For those who would contemplate any criminal behavior while overseas, there are two things to keep in mind.

The first is that the US government and the host country usually have agreements that give the host the right of prosecution and punishment of any individuals who commit crimes against citizens or property of the host country.

The second is a more personal matter — who wants to be known by family and friends, shipmates and fellow soldiers as one who brought shame to their country, service or Corps?

## On The Other Side

- ◆ **Medical Considerations**
- ◆ **Substance Abuse**
- ◆ **Educational Factors**
- ◆ **Financial Matters**
- ◆ **Marital Check**

# Pre-Departure Overseas Check-Up

## Medical Considerations

Many overseas areas ARE NOT equipped to handle complex or chronic medical and health problems. Some areas, because of climate or environmental fac-

*“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness.”*

*Mark Twain*

tors, may create major problems out of otherwise minor ailments.

BE HONEST with the interviewer and give a complete appraisal of the health of your entire family. Not speaking up now and toughing it out is not a good idea. Usually there is a good military medical facility at even the smallest of overseas bases. But, if a clinic has only one doctor, he/she cannot be available 24 hours each day. It is very important you and your family have a proper and thorough medical screening.

## Substance Abuse

This is the time to deal with the issue honestly and, if necessary, to take advantage of the military alcohol/substance abuse rehabilitation program. Dealing with alcoholism and the often anti-social behavior it engenders is something the Navy would prefer to treat before one embarks

on an overseas tour.

The same can be said about drugs. The Navy/Marine Corps have a NO TOLERANCE POLICY regarding drug abuse. Therefore, if any member of your family has an abuse problem, you must discuss and solve the problem before you go overseas. Drug laws overseas are usually more severe than in the United States. Often long prison sentences and sometimes automatic death sentences are the norm, with little, if any, consideration for first time offenses or the age or citizenship of the offender. You owe it to your family to make this very clear and to determine to what degree, if any, drugs might be a problem during an overseas tour.

## Educational Factors

Educational problems should also be dealt with honestly. If you have a child who has a learning disability, is physically handicapped, hard of hearing, has vision problems or is otherwise handicapped, you should make this very clear. The Department of Defense Dependents School (DoDDS) system operates worldwide, but most of its schools cannot handle special problems. The kind of facilities available can have a profound effect on your ability to function effectively overseas. Make clear what your problem is and get a precise answer as to what is available to help you.



## Financial Matters

Serious financial difficulty or accumulated debts which you are having trouble paying should be fully explained. If your family depends upon two incomes, be sure to check with your local Family Service Center (FSC) concerning the availability of a job overseas through the Employment Assistance Program (EAP). The days of favorable exchange rates when Americans could live well and save money while overseas are over. Financial difficulties at home are never pleasant, but they can be disastrous overseas.



## Marital Check

Experience has shown that an overseas tour will not automatically renew a troubled marriage. If you and your spouse need to discuss marital difficulties with a counselor, contact your local Chaplains' office or the Family Service Center for referrals. On the other hand, some marriages are strengthened during an overseas tour. Objectively look at your own relationship before accepting orders.